

THE LATE Plot on the Fleet, Detected:

WITH
The *Jacobites* Memorial to the French King:
And an Account of those Gentlemen, who
Invited the French Fleet to Invade our *English*
Coasts, &c.

1728 285



TO see the *French* (in a manner)
Masters at Sea, and the *English*
Glory, for the present, thus
sink in the Eyes of all Christen-
dom by a Complication of Disasters, has
been the occasion of great Enquiry into the
Source and Cause of so important Events.
If any are so Ignorant as not to know by
what means the *French* of late came to
have so much Shipping (who, but in the
days of Queen *Elizabeth*, durst not put a
Ship on the Stocks without leave from *Eng-
land*) let them peruse *Andrew Marvell's British*
of Poetry, and the Secret History of the Two
late Reigns, and he may be sufficiently in-
formed. The design of this Paper is to
Characterize, briefly, the Persons that In-
vited the *French* Fleet into the *English* Chan-
nel. The King and Queen being no sooner
settled in the Throne, than the Spirit of Mur-
muring began to exercise it self on a sort of
Gentlemen, who had made so great a noise
in the World, with their Doctrines of *Jure*
Divino and Passive Obedience; tho' to any
body, but those that are wilfully Ignorant,
the drawing and Assisting His Majesty against
the late King, before the Crown was con-
ferred upon him, was a greater Invasion of
their darling Principles, than the Swearing
to him, and justly Obeying him, after He
is declared and acknowledged King by the
Parliament.

The first step of Conscience, this part of
the Clergy made, was the Waiting against
the taking the new Oaths to their Majesties,
enjoy'd them by Act of Parliament; and
the buzzing into the Ears of their poor Vo-
taries, the Unlawfulness of those Oaths,
and the continuing Right of King *James*
to the Crown: This piece of their Artillery,
it was thought would have done some con-
siderable Execution: But alas! many of the
Gentlemen themselves who had begun to
persuade others to Refuse the Oaths, they
could so little digest the loss of their Liv-
ings, as they chose rather to take their un-
lawful Oaths (as they call'd them) than to
expose themselves to the least Suffering.

The next step of the Plot was, to Cheat
the World and their own Consciences with
a ridiculous and foolish distinction of taking
the Oaths to a King *de facto*, but not *de*
jure. The design of this distinction was
first to save their own Conscience, and to
vindicate themselves from the Reproaches
of their Comrades, who had absolutely re-
fused to take the Oaths. And secondly,
To bear it in upon the Minds of the People,
That their Majesties were not lawful and
rightful King and Queen of *England*, but
de facto only, that is, in plain *English*,
downright Usurpers.

This distinction did not only give them
scope to take the Oaths to their Majesties,

but also to Pray for them by Name in their Pulpits. But many, of more Sincerity than the rest, would not Pray for them by Name at all; and yet, to prevent any trouble from the Law, they wisely prayed in general terms for the King and Queen. Here was a pretty way of playing fast and loose with God Almighty; he might take it in what sense he pleased.

These steps of the Plot were to be back'd with another Engine of theirs; and that was the publishing to the World the History of *Passive Obedience*; altho' most of the Citations of this Pamphlet, be far wide of the Question, and refer only to *Obedience to Majesty*, in general, and the unlawfulness of private Persons, their rising up against the Government upon every frivolous Pretext. The next and greatest Engine of their Plot, is the happy result of a kind of *Oeconomick Council* of the whole Party: The Liturgy of the Church of England must be laid aside, and a new one must be Calculated for the Meridian of King *James's* Tottering Fortune; and the greatest wonder of all is, That the Council which publish'd this new Liturgy, did not usher it in with, It seems good to the Holy Ghost, and to us. In this new Liturgy they insinuate to the World, That in effect, we're without King, without Priest, and without God in the World. A dreadful Doom before a terrible Tribunal! None are indeed at this rate, within the compass of the Church, but this *Jacobite-Club* and their followers. But let us hear the very words of this part of the Liturgy; *Restore us again, say they, the publick Worship of thy Name, the reverend Administration of thy Sacraments; raise up the former Government both in Church and State, that we may be no longer without King, without Priest, and without God in the World.*

They afterwards proceed to pray for the Prosperity of the Arms of King *James*, and the French King, against their Majesties and Government.

But now I come to the main points of

this Noble Contrivance. His Majesty from a Noble and Boundless Courage, will needs venture His Person once more for the safety of these Kingdoms.

The King being gone; Admiral *Kilgrew* being in the Straights; and Sir *Clovesley Shovel* in St. *George's-Channel*, and the *Holland Squadron* not yet joyn'd ours, nor our fully met; then was the time for our Plotters to put their long thought-on design in Execution. In order to which, at one of their *General Meetings* in London, where it was necessary some of the Clergy should be present to Bless so Pious a Work; it was concluded to give in a Memorial in the Name of the *Loyal and Distressed Subjects* of England, (for so they nam'd themselves) to his Most Christian Majesty, Humbly Inviting him out of his extraordinary Goodness, and for the Affection he always bore to oppress Vertue, That he would assist them in restoring Their lawful King, His Ancient Ally and Confederat to his Throne; and in breaking the Yoke of Usurpation, under which these Three Nations were, at this time so heavily Groaning. But it will be absolutely fit here to insert the very Words of their Memorial it self, as it has been discover'd by a certain Person of late, and as it was express in the French Tongue, in which it was Originally written, and given in.

The MEMORIAL is thus:

To his Most Serene, and Most Invincible Prince, *Lewis* the Great, his Most Christian Majesty; The Memorial of the Loyal and Distress'd Noblemen, Clergy, Gentlemen, and others of all Ranks within the Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, at present under the Forters of a Cruel Usurpation.

Great and Invincible Monarch,

THE resplendent Rays of Your Majesties Virtues, have render'd all the World your Adversers: And that Inherent Goodness of which Your Majesty stands so transcendently poss'd, does render You the only Sanctuary of all the Distress'd. It's in the Confidence which this Your Unparallel'd goodness gives us, That we in all humble Duty, presume to lay our sighs at Your Majesties feet: And that we Implore your Royal Favour and Assistance, to rid us of the great and insupportable Afflictions we lye under at present.

It's in your Royal Arms and Bounty we repose our Hope and Confidence; and expect to see our lawful King, your Ancient Friend and Ally, restor'd to the rightful Throne of his ancestors, out of whose wicked Men have thrust him. And because this is the most proper time for your Majesty to assist us with the assured expectation of success, we have presum'd to lay before you the present favourable Circumstances, that do concur to make your Majesties glorious Enterprize the more easie; which are principally these.

1. The Prince of Orange, the Usurper, is just now on his Journey to Ireland; And being once arriv'd in that Kingdom, if a part of Your Majesties Fleet were able to block up St. George's Channel, the Usurper's Army would certainly be starv'd; being all their Provisions come by Sea from Scotland and England; And that part of the Countrey they are Masters of, is already haras'd and ruin'd by both the Armies, both the last Year and this.

2. The Usurper has partly sent before and partly takes along with himself the rabble, almost, and the better Disciplin'd parts of the Army: And leaves behind him but a very few of the English Regiments; who serve him mere out of necessity and fears than out of any Love to him, or to the Interest.

3. The Forces he leaves behind are so very few, that they are scarce capable to keep Guards in the Tower, the Savoy, Somerset-House, and at White-Hall all together: And the three Regiments that are sent for out of Holland, will not be yet ready for some weeks to Embark; neither is it thought they will stir a foot, because of want of Pay. Likewise both Officers and Soldiers are not entirely Devoted to the Usurpers Interest, the most of them being in the Service of our Lawful King, before he was necessitated to leave us.

4. Most of our Fleet are at so great distance one from another, that they cannot this year make any considerable Body. There being the best and ablest Seamen and Ships with Killgrew in the Straights, and with Shouel in St. George's Channel, amounting together to more than nineteen Ships of War.

5. There are likewise employed for Convoys, and about the Western Coasts of Scotland, to the number of five or six Ships, all separately.

6. The Dutch Squadron is in no appearance to be here to joyne ours of a sudden; both because they are not yet in a readiness, and that the Admirals of Holland make scruples, and are highly discontented to serve under our English Admiral. Moreover, tho they were joyn'd us, they will but make up at the most but Twenty sail of Ships; and them none of the best, considering their Tallest and best mann'd Ships are out upon Convoys.

7. Our own Fleet is ill mann'd, and the Soldiers and Seamen extremely discontented for want of their Pay; and severall of the Officers were those that belonged to our King before he went away.

There are Five more Articles in this Memorial, that for certain Reasons I will not Copy out; only I'll tell the Reader, they are of a piece with the rest, and full as ill. Here are some Truths, but a great many more Lyes; and such as none but People of their gang could be capable of. And if the Reader's Curiosity tempt him to be very inquisitive how this Memorial came to light; let him wait but a little, and perhaps he will see both it, and the Deliverers and Contrivers of it made publick enough.

The French King giving ear to the Representations and Importunities of these Gentlemen, put all his Wit on the rack to get Money to equip the greatest Fleet that ever that Nation set to Sea; and at a vast charge he brought the *Thoulon* Squadron round the whole Continent of Spain, and through the Straights, to joyn his *Brest* Fleet. He left not behind one Seaman that could be found in France, and scarce one Ship more of any Force in all his Harbours. Upon the notice given him by his Trusty Pensioners here, he directs this French Armado straight for the Isle of Wights, where our Fleet was to Rendezvous; and if it had but Arrived there some few days before it came, we had not had Twenty Ships together at that place: Yet so near were we to Ruin, that albeit our Fleet was become by that time pretty strong, and the most of the Ships arriv'd; yet if Heaven had not turned the Wind in a Moment, they had every one of them, in all probability, been Burn'd at Anchor. The French Fleet passed in sight of *Weymouth*, the Mayor of that place did very wisely dispatch two Expresses, one for the Queen, and another for my Lord Torrington, the Admirall: But the Wind blowing a fair fresh Gale, the French Fleet had certainly been amidst ours, before the *Weymouth* Express could possibly reach *Portsmouth*, if the Wind had continued but some hours longer. Our Fleet being in this imminent, and almost

most

most inevitable hazard, and the *French* being within a few Leagues of them, the Wind in an instant turn'd about, and put a stop to their design'd and easie Victory, by obliging them to lye by.

This happy Providence counter-acted all the Plots of our Enemies both at Home and Abroad; and we had time given us to prevent the Destruction that threatned us. And to compleat the Mercy, it fell out, that at that very precise time this hapned, there was a full Discovery made by some Persons here, who had been concerned in the Plot all along, of their whole Affairs and Transactions both with *France*, and at Home.

I am very inclinable to believe; that all the Officers and Seamen of the Fleet have been Proof against the Insinuations of our Plotters; and that they have not yielded to the Temptations of *French* Gold; tho' at the same time, I do not doubt, they have been assaulted with both: And if so, the wonder is the greater, if it be true, that is talked so freely up and down, That a great many of the Officers have bought their Places with Money. It's hard to believe that there are any such practices in *England*, as the buying and selling Places, especially those in the *Fleet*, upon which depend both the Safety and Glory of *England*: But if any such thing be, then the *Retreat* we have been forc'd to make, will certainly open the eyes of our Governors, to see the mighty and almost irrecoverable prejudices that attend such slavish Methods of getting Commands; and will put them upon employing fit Persons, in whose Fidelity and Valour we may safely trust.

Our Murmurers and Plotters were strangely elevated with the expectation of its Success. In their fond imaginations King *James* was already at *White Hall*; and some of them were publicly in Coffee-Houses acting the part of a Herald, in Marshalling his Triumphant entry into *London*. And the ordinary subject of their discourse was, the Greatness and Magnanimity of the *French*

King, the number and force of his Fleet, the weakness of ours; and sometimes a dissent of his Majesties forces in *Ireland*, to keep them in heart. Their impudence was arriv'd at that height, that in open Exchange, one of the long Robe was pleas'd to say with relation to the *Hollanders* loss in the late Engagement at Sea, That they were well paid off for the Present they had sent us twenty Months ago.

But that none of that Party may want the due praise their Writings deserve, I'll give the Reader a Dedication made by one of them, and him of the long Robe too) to the *French* King not many Months since, when the Plot was just upon the wheel, and which for the Nobleness of the stile I must commend, tho' the matter of it be downright Blasphemy. To the Immortality and Eternity of the Name and Divinity of Lewis the Great Emperor of France, Victorious, Happy, Merciful, Allwise, August; in acknowledgment of his Royal goodness and bounty towards the afflicted Princes of Brittain, These Verses Written in English, are in name of the British Isles most humbly Consecrated by, &c. Thus we see how far an English Jacobite can outvie a *French* Poet himself, in the art of Blasphemous Flattery.

But how soon are all these kind of Peoples hopes laid in the dust, upon the arrival of the news of His Majesties Glorious Victories in *Ireland*? And how far has it counterpois'd the joy they had some days ago for the Action between the two Fleets? A little time will shew, that notwithstanding of all they have done to Ruine him, no Body will be more forward than they to fawn upon his Majesties good Fortune, whenever once they are quite out of hopes of King *James's* retrieving his: But sure the Government will be Wiser, than ever to dart any of his warm Beams upon such kind of Creatures, any farther than to let them live the Scorn of all Honest Men, and the Hatred of every one that loves their Country and their Religion.

FINIS.

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